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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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Items 72, 79, 96, 97, 104, 105, 157 and 162 of the provisional agenda*
GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT
CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND STOCKPILING OF BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION
ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL
MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM
GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE YEAR 2000 DATE CONVERSION PROBLEM OF COMPUTERS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 10 September 1998 from the Permanent Representatives of the Russian Federation and the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a joint statement by the President of the United States of America and the President of the Russian Federation on common security challenges at the threshold of the twenty-first century, signed at Moscow on 2 September 1998 in the course of the meeting between the President of the United States of America, W. Clinton, and the President of the Russian Federation, B. Yeltsin.

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We should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 72, 79, 96, 97, 104, 105, 157 and 162 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) W. RICHARDSON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
United States of America to the
United Nations

(Signed) S. LAVROV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Russian Federation to the
United Nations

Annex

Joint statement by the President of the United States of America and the President of the Russian Federation on common security challenges at the threshold of the twenty-first century, signed at Moscow on 2 September 1998

We, the Presidents of the United States of America and of the Russian Federation, declare that cooperation between the United States and the Russian Federation will be of the greatest import in the twenty-first century for promoting prosperity and strengthening security throughout the world. In this connection, we reaffirm that the United States of America and the Russian Federation are natural partners in advancing international peace and stability. We have devoted particular attention to intensifying joint efforts to eliminate threats inherited from the cold war and to meet common security challenges at the threshold of the twenty-first century.

We understand that the most serious and pressing danger is the proliferation of nuclear, biological, chemical and other types of weapons of mass destruction, the technologies for their production and their means of delivery. Given the increasing interdependence of the modern world, these threats are becoming transnational and global in scope; they affect not only the national security of the United States and the Russian Federation, but also international stability. We reaffirm the determination of the United States and the Russian Federation to cooperate actively and closely with each other, as well as with all other interested countries, to avert and reduce this threat by taking new steps, seeking new forms of collaboration and strengthening generally recognized international norms.

We recognize that more must be done and today we have taken a number of steps to enhance not only our security, but global security as well. We are declaring our firm commitment to intensifying negotiations towards early completion of the Protocol to the Biological Weapons Convention. We are embarking upon new and important cooperation to further lessen the risks of false warnings of missile attacks. And we have agreed upon principles to guide our cooperation in the management and disposition of plutonium from nuclear weapons programmes so that it can never again be used in a nuclear weapon.

Common commitments have made the United States and the Russian Federation partners in developing the foundations of an international non-proliferation regime, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, the Convention on Biological and Toxin Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The Russian Federation and the United States reaffirm their commitment to the goal of having all countries accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in its present form, without amendments. They are also committed to the strengthened guidelines of the Nuclear Suppliers Group. As participants in the Conference on Disarmament, they jointly achieved success in the negotiations of the Chemical Weapons Convention and of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and call upon all countries to accede to these Treaties. Guided by these obligations, they have taken substantial practical steps to reduce the

global nuclear threat and to control transfers of sensitive technology. They remain deeply concerned about the nuclear tests in South Asia and reaffirm United States and Russian commitments to coordinate closely support for all steps set forth in the joint communiqué of the five permanent members of the Security Council, as endorsed by the G-8 and the Security Council.

The START Treaty and the Presidents' nuclear arms reduction initiatives in 1991-1992 will help to ensure the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament and enhance international security. We have together eliminated more than 1,700 heavy bombers and missile launchers, including more than 700 launch silos, 45 submarines capable of launching nuclear missiles, and deactivated or eliminated more than 18,000 strategic and tactical nuclear warheads. Reaffirming our commitment to strict compliance with our obligations under the START I and Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaties, we declare our resolve to collaborate in expediting the entry into force of the START II Treaty. Immediately after Russian ratification of START II, the United States and the Russian Federation will begin negotiations regarding lower levels within the framework of a START III Treaty.

As a result of significant reductions in their nuclear forces, the United States and the Russian Federation have large stockpiles of nuclear materials that are no longer needed for defence purposes. They remain committed to providing the maximum degree of security and accountability for these and other stockpiles of weapons-grade fissile materials and reaffirm the importance of implementing the July 1998 Agreement signed by the Vice-President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation on Scientific and Technical Cooperation in the Management of Plutonium that has been Withdrawn from Nuclear Military Programmes.

We reaffirm our commitment to further cooperation on export controls as an essential part of ensuring non-proliferation. Our Governments recently created an additional mechanism for cooperation in the field of exports of sensitive technology. To this end, at our meeting today we agreed to establish expert groups on nuclear matters, missile and space technology, catch-all and internal compliance, conventional weapons transfers controls, as well as law enforcement, customs matters and licensing in order to enhance cooperation and to implement specific bilateral assistance and cooperative projects. These groups will be formed within the next month and begin practical activities without delay. A protected communications channel between senior officials of both countries has also been established, which will ensure the rapid and confidential exchange of information on non-proliferation matters.

We reaffirmed the importance of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) and its fundamental contribution to stability, predictability and cooperation in Europe. As we work together to build a more integrated and secure Europe, we are committed to accelerating the negotiations to adapt the Treaty to changing circumstances. We consider it necessary to complete work on adapting the Treaty in the nearest future. We reaffirm our commitment to comply with the Treaty's provisions during the process of its adaptation.

The United States and the Russian Federation remain committed to jointly building an enduring peace based upon the principles of democracy and the

indivisibility of security. They reaffirm the common objective of strengthening security and stability in the interest of all countries, and combating aggressive nationalism and preventing abuses of human rights. They will consult with each other and strive to cooperate in averting and settling conflicts and in crisis management. In this regard, we attach great importance to operational military cooperation, in both bilateral and multilateral settings, between the armed forces of the United States and the Russian Federation. We are pleased to note that definite progress has been achieved in the area of defence cooperation, particularly in strengthening nuclear security and in implementation of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Programme.

We recognize that the soundness of an increasingly interdependent world financial and economic system affects the well-being of people in all countries. We agree on the importance to the international community of the success of economic and structural reform in the Russian Federation.

Strengthening environmental protection in the twenty-first century is imperative in order to protect natural systems on which humanity depends. The Russian Federation and the United States will work together to resolve the global climate problem, to preserve the ozone layer, to conserve biodiversity and to ensure the sustainable management of forests and other natural resources. We underscored the necessity of deepening broad-based international and bilateral cooperation in this area.

We declare that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, irrespective of its motives, is utterly unacceptable. The United States and the Russian Federation harshly condemn the recent terrorist bombings in Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania. At our meeting today we agreed on a series of actions that respond to this growing scourge.

We agreed to intensify joint efforts to counteract the transnational threats to our economies and security, including those posed by organized crime, the narcotics trade, the illegal arms trade, computer and other high-technology crime, and money laundering. We agreed to establish a bilateral law enforcement working group that will meet on a regular basis, and we agreed to step up law enforcement efforts and improve the public information system to eradicate trafficking in women and children. We agreed that the United States and the Russian Federation will take an active part in working out an effective United Nations convention to combat transnational organized crime. We welcome the hosting by the Russian Federation of a G-8 transnational crime conference at the ministerial level in Moscow in 1999.

We recognize the importance of promoting the positive aspects and mitigating the negative aspects of the information technology revolution now taking place, which is a serious challenge to ensuring the future strategic security interests of our two countries. As part of the efforts to resolve these problems the United States and the Russian Federation have already held productive discussions within the framework of the Defence Consultative Group on resolving the potential year 2000 computer problem. The United States and the Russian Federation are committed to continuing consultations and to studying the wider consequences of this computer problem in order to resolve issues of mutual interest and concern.

We declare that the common security challenges on the threshold of the twenty-first century can be met only by consistently mobilizing the efforts of the entire international community. All available resources must be utilized to do so. In the event that it is necessary, the world community must promptly take effective measures to counter such threats. The United States and the Russian Federation will continue to play a leadership role bilaterally and multilaterally to advance common objectives in the area of security.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THE PRESIDENT OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION